

Testimony Supporting

H.B. 6282: An Act Requiring an Annual Results-Based Accountability Report Card  
Evaluating State Policies and Programs Impacting Children

Sharon D. Langer  
Select Committee on Children  
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Senator Musto, Representative Urban and Members of the Select Committee on Children:

I am Senior Policy Fellow with Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based public education and advocacy organization that works statewide to promote the well-being of Connecticut's children, youth, and families. I am testifying on behalf of Connecticut Voices today in **support** of H.B. 6282.

My colleagues and I support the important goal of the legislation which would require this committee to publish a report card that "evaluates the progress of state policies and programs in promoting the result that all Connecticut children grow up in a stable living environment, safe, healthy and ready to lead successful lives. . . [The report card shall include] state-wide rates of child abuse, child poverty, low birth weight, third grade reading proficiency, and the annual social health index."

Connecticut Voices supports data driven policy development. Without good data and dispassionate analysis, lawmakers and the public are not able to determine whether state policies that have been enacted by this legislature are meeting their stated goals in the areas of education, child protection, healthy development, food security, and the like.

We respectfully suggest that the state Department of Social Services, which is responsible for the HUSKY and Medicaid programs, Care4Kids, and other programs important to the lives of children, be included in the RBA process and that the proposed statute be amended to state that the report card will be distributed to DSS, as follows:

Sec. 1(a). . . shall transmit the report card electronically to (1) members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies and human services, (2) the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education and Public Health, **and Social Services** (3) the Child Advocate, (4) the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, and (5) the Chief Court Administrator.

Precisely because lawmakers are facing crushing budgetary problems, it is vitally important that sufficient funding and staffing resources be provided to conduct the reviews on an annual basis.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 6282. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about these comments or need additional information.